

## Six Significant Landscapes

*Stevens, Wallace, 1879-1955*

### I

An old man sits  
In the shadow of a pine tree  
In China.  
He sees larkspur,  
Blue and white,  
At the edge of the shadow,  
Move in the wind.  
His beard moves in the wind.  
The pine tree moves in the wind.  
Thus water flows  
Over weeds.

### II

The night is of the colour  
Of a woman's arm:  
Night, the female,  
Obscure,  
Fragrant and supple,  
Conceals herself.  
A pool shines,  
Like a bracelet  
Shaken in a dance.

### III

I measure myself  
Against a tall tree.  
I find that I am much taller,  
For I reach right up to the sun,  
With my eye;  
And I reach to the shore of the sea  
With my ear.  
Nevertheless, I dislike  
The way ants crawl  
In and out of my shadow.

### IV

When my dream was near the moon,  
The white folds of its gown  
Filled with yellow light.  
The soles of its feet

Grew red.  
Its hair filled  
With certain blue crystallizations  
From stars,  
Not far off.

V

Not all the knives of the lamp-posts,  
Nor the chisels of the long streets,  
Nor the mallets of the domes  
And high towers,  
Can carve  
What one star can carve,  
Shining through the grape-leaves.

VI

Rationalists, wearing square hats,  
Think, in square rooms,  
Looking at the floor,  
Looking at the ceiling.  
They confine themselves  
To right-angled triangles.  
If they tried rhomboids,  
Cones, waving lines, ellipses --  
As, for example, the ellipse of the half-moon --  
Rationalists would wear sombreros.